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The Penguin Modern Painters

BEN NICHOLSON

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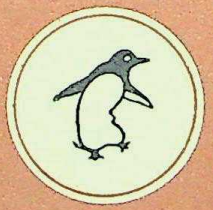
Museum Library, Lucknow



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JOHN SUMMERSON

BEN NICHOLSON

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THE PENGUIN MODERN PAINTERS

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COLOUR PLATES

1 PAINTED RELIEF 1943 oil on canvas 48 × 42 the Artist

3 POMEGRANATES 1929 oil and chalk on canvas 18¾ × 22½ Helen Sutherland

5 CUMBRIAN LANDSCAPE 1928 oil on canvas 19 × 25 Wilfrid Roberts

7 STILL LIFE 1929—35 oil and pencil on canvas 26 × 32 C. S. Reddihough

9 PRINCE AND PRINCESS 1932 oil and pencil on board 18 × 12 John Summerson

11 AU CHAT BOTTÉ 1932 oil and pencil on canvas 35¾ × 44 the Artist

13 COIN AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS 1933 oil on board 42 × 48 the Artist

15 STILL LIFE 1933 oil on board 11 × 15½ Adrian Stokes

17 PAINTING 1933 oil and pencil on canvas 13⅞ × 7⅞ the late John Hilton (now coll'tn. Edna Nixon)

19 PAINTED RELIEF 1939 oil on carved board

version 1 : 33 × 45 Museum of Modern Art, New York

version 2 : 10 × 13½ Alastair Morton

21 TWO FORMS 1940—42 oil on canvas 36 × 35¾ C. S. Reddihough

23 PAINTED RELIEF 1942—43 oil and pencil on carved board 12 × 8½ Barbara Hepworth

25 PAINTED RELIEF 1943—44 oil on carved board 33 × 40 Ian Gibson-Smith

27 PARROT'S EYE 1945 oil and pencil on board 7 × 9 the Artist

29 STILL LIFE 1945 oil and pencil on canvas 21 × 22½ the Artist

31 STILL LIFE 1945 oil and pencil on board 16 × 16¼ F. L. S. Murray

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BLACK-AND-WHITE PLATES

2 STRIPED JUG 1911 (first painting) oil on canvas C. 20 × 26 William Nicholson

4 STILL LIFE WITH KNIFE AND LEMON 1927 oil on canvas 36 × 48 H. S. Ede

6 PILL CREEK, CORNWALL 1928 oil and pencil on canvas 19 × 24 C. S. Reddihough

8 STILL LIFE 1933—35 oil on board 30 × 24 Whitney Straight

10 PLAYING CARDS 1932 oil on canvas 12¾ × 16¾ Geoffrey Grigson

12 GIRL IN MIRROR (drawing) 1932 pencil on paper 14½ × 12 Helen Sutherland

14 ST. REMY, PROVENCE 1933 oil on board 42 × 36½ Helen Sutherland

16 GUITAR 1933 oil on board 32¾ × 7¾ Tate Gallery

18 RELIEF 1934 oil on carved wood 24 × 16 Hans Frankfort

20 WHITE RELIEF 1935 oil on carved wood 41 × 46 Winifred Dacre

22 WHITE RELIEF 1935 oil on carved mahogany 39 × 65 the Artist

24 STILL LIFE 1930—42 oil and pencil on canvas 18½ × 17¾ S. Speight and J. L. Martin

26 WHITE RELIEF 1939 oil on carved board 42¾ × 41 Art of this Century, New York

28 PAINTED RELIEF 1944—45 oil on carved board 28½ × 29 Margaret Gardiner

30 PAINTED RELIEF 1945 oil on carved board 36 × 30 James Archdale

32 PROJECT 1945 oil and pencil on board 8 × 7⅝ E. Russ

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BEN NICHOLSON

SINCE 1933, nearly all Ben Nicholson's work has been "abstract". From abstraction, moreover, he has passed to something for which that word will hardly do – paintings whose main components are lines, circles and rectangles, *constructed* paintings which depart from the agreed convention of what "a painting" means in common usage. Of the rightness or wrongness of a painter trespassing thus into a region embarrassing to some art-critics and, apparently, unapproachable by many lovers of painting, I will say nothing – except that I am quite sure that rightness or wrongness do not come into the matter at all. But a thing about Ben Nicholson which *is* amenable to comment is, quite simply, the continuity of his work, the story and character of its development. The line which this development has traced strikes me as having a firmness, an absolute certainty of control, as impressive as it is rare. To draw attention to this is the limit of my aim in the following notes, in which I shall record some relevant biographical facts and try to describe how this art of Nicholson's has evolved.

* * *

Ben Nicholson was born near Uxbridge on April 10, 1894, the eldest son of William and Mabel Nicholson – both painters. William Nicholson is the famous painter of portraits, still-lifes and landscapes. Mabel Nicholson, who died in 1918, had been Mabel Pryde; James Pryde, her brother, worked with William Nicholson in the poster partnership which signed itself J. & W. Beggarstaff. These names show clearly the world in which Ben grew up. It was urban, urbane; anti-Victorian – perhaps the liveliest region of English civilization between the Boer War and 1914. Max Beerbohm was part of it, and there are affinities between his slim, wise, glittering essays and William Nicholson's still-lifes – affinities which are easily felt and would not be very hard to explain.

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In this sophisticated setting it was supposed that Ben Nicholson would grow up to be a painter. The supposition nearly had the reverse effect: he half resolved to be a writer. But fundamental aptitude was strong enough to make up his mind for him and he went to the Slade. He was there for one term, at the same time as several painters whose names were to become known between the wars: Paul Nash, Mark Gertler, David Bomberg, William Roberts, Edward Wadsworth, Stanley Spencer. Nicholson's acquaintance with the Slade was, however, slight. Even apart from its short duration and the counter-attraction of billiards at the Gower Hotel, the life of the place had no particular appeal; perhaps the academic setting felt too like going into the family profession. In the cast room he made his own use of "the antique", interpreting the casts in hard profile drawings of a kind suggested by primitive Italian portraits. On canvas, his first work, 1911, was a jug (Plate 2). It cost him much time and much labour. This painting, or one like it, was pronounced very promising by Lavery; and although the particular kind of promise detected by him has not been fulfilled there is a delicate obstinacy about this little painting which, in the light of what was to happen in the next thirty years, promises quite a lot. It is easy now to see in its solitariness, its anti-swagger, the painter's horror of being drawn into a current, of becoming a genteel protagonist of Vermeerishness, sitting in the sunshine of Old Chelsea. If Nicholson was going to paint at all he was going to re-discover the painter's business for himself. This took him a long time.

After the Slade came a visit to Tours, to paint and learn French. Nicholson learnt French and painted a candlestick. Later, he went to Milan to learn Italian and came back with a correct pronunciation and one still-life. Then he went off to Madeira for his health and afterwards, in 1917, to Pasadena, Cal., producing one still-life in each place and coming home in June, 1918. In London, the unproductive apprenticeship continued. He slowly discovered Cézanne, and his attention was attracted to Wyndham Lewis and Vorticism. He was inquisitive, to begin with, about this kind of thing – critically inquisitive to understand why what looked like extravagant nonsense should be attended to by men less likely than most to suffer fools. Then the energy and aggression of Vorticism seemed to provide something he needed, for it cracked the smooth shell of sophistication,

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inside which he was trying, not very happily, to become a painter.

The real revelation, however, came when he began to visit Paris and to see the work of the cubists. He was twenty-seven when an event specially memorable to him took place. As he has described it to me in a letter (January 3, 1944), here is his own recollection of it:

> I remember suddenly coming on a cubist Picasso at the end of a small upstairs room at Paul Rosenberg's gallery. It must have been a 1915 painting – it was what seemed to me then completely abstract. And in the centre there was an absolutely miraculous *green* – very deep, very potent and absolutely real. In fact, none of the actual events in one's life have been more real than that, and it still remains a standard by which I judge any reality in my own work . . .

The experience of Picasso soon had the effect of releasing Nicholson's energy. Three successive winters he spent at Castagnola, Lugano, working with his first wife, Winifred Nicholson, and at times producing an average of three or four pictures a week. He describes the period as one of "fast and furious experiment". Little of the work he did then survives, but its formative importance was immense. A scrap book put together in 1922 summarizes his loyalties at the time: Giotto, Uccello, Cézanne, the Douanier, Matisse, Derain, Braque, Picasso.

So it took twelve years or rather more for Nicholson to stand independent from the art-world in which he was brought up and to become his own master, conscious of the power to paint. The unproductiveness of the early period is remarkable. He had come to painting with a fastidious reluctance. Born to what might appear great advantages to a young painter – talent, name, encouragement, opportunity – one obsession overrode all: the absolute need to rediscover painting for himself. Now most young painters and, indeed, everyone with a mind of his own, knows something about what this means. There is an age at which we come to review everything we have been taught, or so much of it as we remember: to revise our admirations, withdraw second-hand loyalties, forget what doesn't matter to us, until certain scattered feelings and beliefs run together and come into focus to make our own head and heart. It is mental growing-up. In Nicholson, this process was specially urgent and difficult, and its accomplishment – more nearly integral than in most of us –

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proportionately productive of the sense of authority which belongs to the creative mind. The art with which he had been brought up was not a negligible art. To see it whole, to see all round it and to see what was on the far side was as rigorous an education of a painting personality as can be conceived. Out of it, after the intense experimentalism of Lugano, came the semi-abstract still-lifes of 1926 – 33. (Plates 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15 and 16.)

These paintings are closely related to the Paris School of the 1920's – to some of Picasso and to Braque especially. The degree of abstraction, the feeling for the domestic components of the traditional still-life (tables with jugs, mugs, bottles, etc.) are much the same. But every Nicholson canvas stands separate against the Paris background. There is no "quotation", never a trace of compromised independence. The beauty of these works of 1926 – 33 is, I think, amply appreciated by people who have any liking at all for contemporary painting. Their innocent, brilliant colour and lively surface variations are irresistibly charming. But there is more than charm ; there is the continuous pursuit of the abstract idea – that metaphysical thread which runs right through this phase of Nicholson's work and on into the geometrical paintings. I must try to describe, as nearly as I can, what seems to me the nature of these still-lifes, not because I think these or any paintings can be interpreted in words but because it may help to bring both the early and the late paintings into the perspective I intend.

Take as starting-point what I shall call *the identity between canvas and idea :* an obscure phrase as it stands, but let me explain. Now, an easel picture is an unnatural thing. To frame pictures and hang them on walls is a queer habit : a *habit* indeed, a rather bourgeois habit descending from the impanelling of pictures in architectural settings. The feeling of Nicholson's work is against the easel tradition. It is as though movements and actions which should pervade life are made to "give a performance" on a stage. And yet the canvas and its limitations can be reconquered. Movements and actions can be made to "pervade" the stage as a part of their whole conduct in the world and not merely as a performance "got up" because the stage is there. In fact the canvas must be re-discovered as if it was only one of many objects (as indeed it is) which the painter might find and possess and endow with life.

A canvas is a piece of the material world to be dis-

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covered and used and made alive, as the walls of a cave or of a building or as any piece of material can be made alive, if there is the vital correspondence between its shape and nature and the artist's imagination. Here is the primitive and real essence of the artist's relation to the physical world. Old Alfred Wallis of St. Ives, who never saw or cared about a stretched canvas and never set foot in an "artists' colour-man's", made discovery after discovery within the four narrow walls of his untidy living-room. One day it was the plastered jamb of the door ; another a long, narrow piece of building-board which turned up from somewhere ; another the back of the mount of a cheap Victorian print. Each discovery was the discovery of an idea, and in the identity of the painting and the bit of stuff on which it is spread is the essential life of a Wallis.

What was natural and inevitable for the old-age-pensioner in his nut-shell kingdom was to Nicholson, the professional painter and man of the 20th century, something to be arrived at through experience. But on different planes one of Wallis's cardboards and a Nicholson canvas have the same character as being "discovered objects" wrought into paintings.

This identity between painting and canvas, important in the still-lifes, is the very essence of the geometrical work, as I shall show later. The early and late paintings differ in emphasis. The still-lifes develop from the bare canvas to the finished painting rather like a countryside might be supposed to come about by the working of natural forces on the earth's surface. The still-life objects take their places as geographical elements in this countryside. As the painter employs himself on the material, every part of it becomes charged with emotion and mystery. His imagination travels, seeks and explores, finding the position of rigid masses and loosely-flowing or tight-drawn curves, bringing different kinds of life to every part of the surface. The finished painting has something of the feeling of a remembered and cherished scene, where the gentleness of grass, the eloquence of water and the rotund obstinacy of stone are so vivid as to be alive, as alive as one's self.

This is, seen from one point of view, romantic painting of an exceedingly high order. At this point Nicholson might well have "settled down", exploiting the treasure-house of his imagination and enjoying the prestige of being what somebody would surely call "a modern painter in the English Romantic tradition". A little in advance of his public in 1933 he would

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by now have been widely acclaimed. There are those who regret that this is not what happened, and one can forgive an occasional regret that there are not more of these lovely paintings in the world. But to regret, or to blame the painter for not giving us more of what we liked, is not only to under-value a strong and wonderfully clear-cut personality but to mistake the real nature of the earlier paintings. There is one kind of painting which Nicholson turns out from time to time which acts as a link and reveals his mind very clearly. These are the repainted canvases, recognizable in the illustrations by the double dating (for example Plates 7, 8 and 24). In these, he has taken an old still-life – one which has ceased to interest him very much – scraped it laboriously with a razor-blade till only an unrecognizable ghost of the original painting remains. Then he has built up a new still-life on the resulting surface. As most of these repaintings have been done since Nicholson began his geometrical work in 1933, they form an instructive link between the earlier and later types. In them, the "identity between canvas and idea" is impressive; powerful abstract shapes emerge from the site of the still-life, and whereas the old painting remained to some extent within the convention of "a picture in a frame", the new is an object of much greater potency, signalling its power to the space outside the frame, picking up a relationship with the room in which it hangs.

There, I think, is a good verbal clue to the nature of the geometrical paintings. Think of them, for the moment, not as "pictures" but as "objects" – objects possessing a certain kind of life, objects absorbing and giving back life. If you start hanging a few abstract Nicholsons in a room you will soon find how powerful this life is. You will not be satisfied merely to hang the paintings at the salient points in the room: they will suggest their own positions, and wherever you place them they will have their influence on the room. They become parts of the space you live in. The "identity between canvas and idea" has become absolute: painting crosses the conventional boundary between "art" and "life".

But why exactly did Nicholson proceed from the romantic still-life to the abstract? His own answer would be that in painting one does not arrange one's future: one thing comes out of another and points the way which has got to be travelled. It is all the same journey. Turning his back on the "natural landscape" of the still-lifes, Nicholson launched into still, deep water where the round disc of the sun and

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the horizontal meeting of sky and sea are the only spacial boundaries. The straight line and the circle supersede the profile of a jug or the course of a shadow : it is the final dismissal of the painter's need to be prompted by the lurking mysteries of the commonplace. But the dismissal is incidental, merely a point between incomplete and complete self-reliance.

At the same time, it is a step into clear freedom. The intensity in an abstract is greater than in a still-life, because the painter's intuition is free; freedom compels responsibility, and continuity of decision becomes intuition's sole responsibility. Now this is a grave matter ; for if intuition leads all the time, it may lead occasionally into places where the communicability of the painter's work practically ceases. This happens when Nicholson gives us a painting in which, say, two circles within a rectangle constitute the entire content. That painting has some significance in relation to its maker's own development, to his past work and the work to come, but very little otherwise. That must be accepted. That is why an appreciation of Nicholson's whole work is easy, while an appraisal of some of his individual canvases is difficult. But it is fair to say that he rarely loses touch for long and if you stand baffled before one enormous all-white relief, you catch up with him under the spell of another which, engaging with your mood, enthralls you in its strange and brilliant equilibrium.

Each painting is, to Nicholson, an experience. "A different painting, a different sculpture" he has written (*Circle*, 1937), "are different experiences just as walking in a field or over a mountain are different experiences, and it is only at the point at which a painting becomes an actual experience in the artist's life, more or less profound and more or less capable of application according to the artist's capacity to live, that it is capable of becoming a part also of the lives of other people, and that it can take its place in the structure of the world, in everyday life".

An abstract is a complex of minute decisions — on proportion, distribution, colour, texture. The rightness of these decisions is felt and tested by the painter as he works on each individual painting ; by most other people it can, I think, only be tested as part of a general experience of the painter's work and sympathy with the line of its evolution. For to test the rightness of an isolated painting requires a mind at the same pitch of sensibility as the painter's ; whereas to follow the painter's own experience through its successive phases is a course which anyone may pursue. The

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strength of this "historic" curve, the crescence of power, can hardly be missed by any normally sensitive lover of painting.

At this point I ought to say something about Nicholson's relations with the various "movements" in European art of the past thirty years; but this is not at all easy, because Nicholson has never committed himself to partisanship or subscribed to a manifesto. Neither Russian "constructivism" nor the first-war experiments of Malevich have, so far as I know, any bearing on his development. Nicholson has never been consciously affected by "trends" but he has by the individual paintings of individual painters (as in the case of Picasso, already quoted) and also by occasional contact with one remarkable personality. Important to Nicholson was a Miro he saw in 1932–3. "The first *free* painting that I saw and it made a deep impression—as I remember it, a lovely rough circular white cloud on a deep blue background, with an electric black line somewhere." Perhaps more important was his first meeting in 1934 with the Dutch painter Mondrian. Mondrian (who died in New York in 1943) founded, with Van Doesburg, the group known as *De Stijl*. Nicholson met him in Paris, and here (from the letter previously quoted) is his picture of the occasion:

His studio . . . was an astonishing room: very high and narrow . . . with a thin partition between it and a dancing school and with a window on the third floor looking down on to thousands of railway lines emerging from and converging into the Gare Montparnasse. He'd lived there for 25 years and except during the war had scarcely been outside Paris—he'd stuck up on the walls different sized rectangular pieces of board painted a primary red, blue and yellow and white and neutral grey—they'd been built up during those 25 years. The paintings were entirely new to me and I did not understand them on this first visit (and indeed only partially understood them on my second visit a year later). They were merely, for me, a part of the very lovely feeling generated by his thought in the room. I remember after this first visit sitting at a café table on the edge of a pavement almost touching all the traffic going in and out of the Gare Montparnasse, and sitting there for a very long time with an astonishing feeling of quiet and repose (!)—the thing I remembered most was the feeling of light in his room and the pauses and silences during and after he'd been talking. The feeling in

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his studio must have been not unlike the feeling in one of those hermits' caves where lions used to go to have thorns taken out of their paws.

I have quoted this, partly because it settles the question of Nicholson's debt to Mondrian but also because I like its vivid recording of an experience which evidently had its effect on the painter, no less deep for not being immediately recognized.

The real impulse which made Nicholson move on from his still-life world to the more exacting and lonelier world of the abstract was no specific "influence" but just that impulse which has driven his whole painting life and which was generated, as I explained, during the years between the 1911 jug and the first mature still-lifes of 1926. I have already emphasized how, in those years, Nicholson worked his independence from the kind of painting associated with his father's name, and how the prolonged effort to earn this independence developed the particular creative power which he possesses. It is creative power of an unusual kind : it is the power to deny, discard and eliminate, in pursuit of reality : it is the power to realize a live idea by stripping away the dead ideas which lie around it : it is the power of turning one's back resolutely on the known in order to grasp the unknown. This power is rare — much rarer than that imaginative productiveness which is, also, in a sense "creative power" but is, psychologically, a different thing altogether. By imaginative productiveness I understand the easy availability of unconscious experience, as wit or imagery (in literature) or invention (in music); Nicholson has the painting counterpart, but he seems to mistrust it — as he mistrusts surrealism. He is not an ambient explorer of the world of the imagination : he goes from point to point in one continuous journey of discovery — a journey of metaphysical goals. His development has been continuous and even : there have been no round trips and excursions, no blind-alleys explored and left. In this, he is unlike most contemporary painters of any calibre — especially unlike Picasso with his gigantic exploratory sweeps, and unlike Braque and Léger who have circled into lush and over-ripe maturity. His strict and integral continuity over thirty years of painting suggests one illustrious parallel — Cézanne. And it is observable that Nicholson's journey, like Cézanne's, has carried him beyond the fence of the contemporary art-arena, carried him into a position of isolation and, indeed, of anomaly.

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That Nicholson's position among painters of to-day is anomalous is perfectly obvious. He is not even amenable to the extent that semi-abstract artists like Moore and Sutherland are amenable. They conform in so far as the material of their abstractions remains organic and is thus the "legitimate" material of our painting tradition. They can – just – be roped in with the tradition embracing most things from Raphael to the pre-Raphaelites. Nicholson cannot. His affinities with the past are scarce. They are to be found in the very primitive, animist stage of the arts, and in a few individual painters like Uccello and Cézanne where the sense of abstraction is overwhelmingly strong. And his position is peculiar in another way. He has never had the slightest interest in the kind of draughtsmanship which, since the renaissance, has been the very basis of the artist's trade. The representation of objects in perspective is, to him, something wholly unnecessary and supremely boring. When he makes a drawing, the fun of the thing is to see what happens as the lead goes along on the paper, to see how such and such a scene or landscape comes out in the game between pencil, paper and draughtsman. If all goes well it should have a correspondence with the pleasure the scene gives him; but it is always a question of correspondence, not representation.

I suspect that, to Nicholson, the making of a painting has more in common with a game of tennis or a round of golf than with almost anything else. He is very good at ball-games (as a boy, the long out-moded "diabolo" found in him a paramount exponent) and has unlimited reverence for that magical control of a ball in flight which, say, Lacoste achieves on the tennis-court. He loves this kind of dexterity, where something is done not by taking thought or by "knack" but by a perfect co-ordination of mind and body and with perfect ease, precision and economy.

Ben Nicholson's art, rooted in the Cézanne-Picasso tradition, has grown away from it and pierced the temporary boundaries which that tradition set for the painting world. His geometrical works are close to architecture and industrial design, and these affinities are of great interest because the vision of a painter with Nicholson's strong creative power may very well influence architecture and industrial design very deeply. I doubt, for instance, if any architect or designer who has become in the slightest degree familiar with Nicholson's work can remain uninfluenced by it. He may not acknowledge it – or

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even be aware of it – but the painter's vision is communicated to those unconscious faculties which shape the conception of a design in its origin. Nicholson's geometrical paintings are statements of form-colour relationships which open up vistas throughout the world of design. In architecture, I would even go as far as to say that they foreshadow an advance from le Corbusier's wonderful creation of an architectural equivalent to Picasso's cubism. That equivalent, which enabled architecture to come to terms with every condition of modern life, contained a romantic – if you like, a surrealist – element which looks for contradiction. It may be that this contradiction is being supplied by the geometrical art of Nicholson and others. But this is mere guess-work and I find myself on the borders of that speculative field where a critic should never go – unless he thinks he can write art-history before it has been made.

To some – perhaps to the majority – the appearance of a recent Ben Nicholson in a gallery of "representative" modern painting is rather preposterous. There is a lack of propriety in hanging in such an exhibition a frame containing only two or three rectangles and two pencilled circles. It is particularly hard on critics, since there is practically nothing they can say about such a painting – except, perhaps, that it is not a painting. Experienced commentators, who know that in taste and technical ability Nicholson stands very far above any amount of mere competence, take refuge in an allusion to "exercises in spacial arrangement" or express a courteous regret that such studies, however skilled and sensitive, should become "an end in themselves".

I see nothing ignoble or fallacious in such criticisms. They are made from a particular standpoint and, if that standpoint were right in all circumstances, then Nicholson's geometrical paintings would be perhaps even less important than these critics admit. But the standpoint of a critic (and we are all to some extent critics) is exactly fixed by the lines including his angle of vision – that is, the extreme limits of his experience ; and no critic can stretch his experience beyond the range provided by an interpretation of art-history up to the moment at which he writes. Further, he can only exercise his judgment when he is among painters whose objectives are within that range. But there are painters whose objectives are off the map of critical experience and they happen, very often, to be those upon whom the critical system of reference is itself destined to turn. They foreshadow, though they do

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not fix, new standpoints. Present standpoints they inconveniently ignore.

To many, Nicholson's later work is baffling and insoluble. It is felt that there must be "more in it than meets the eye", that it cannot be quite "as simple as it looks". Paradoxically, it is a "difficult" art, just because it makes the least demands on the intellectual apparatus through which we are in the habit of looking at paintings. It is "difficult" because there are no obstacles. Unless, indeed, much acquired experience of many kinds of art and the cultivated man's circumscribed "interest in art" are obstacles. They need not be. But I have noticed that almost everybody can enjoy abstract art when it is presented to them as something else. Joan Miro's set for the ballet, *Jeux d'Enfants*, gave immediate pleasure to thousands who would have felt rather uncomfortable in a show of Miro's paintings. When abstract art makes its appearance on the stage or in a poster or as a specially well-designed product of manufacture it is accepted as the most natural thing in the world. This suggests that such art is in the nature of a "catalyst" — that appreciation of the thing itself is necessarily limited, but that its presence is the condition of other important artistic phenomena. But that is a pedantically evasive point of view. Nicholson's work is *painting*, and as painting has its own proper psychological functions.

But I would prefer not to close with an emphasis on the geometrical or on any one aspect of Nicholson's painting. I would rather draw attention, once again, to the whole course of the painter's work as it follows the needle-point of his intuition, unerring in its evasion of the known, in its pursuit and conquest of truth refracted in the visible world.

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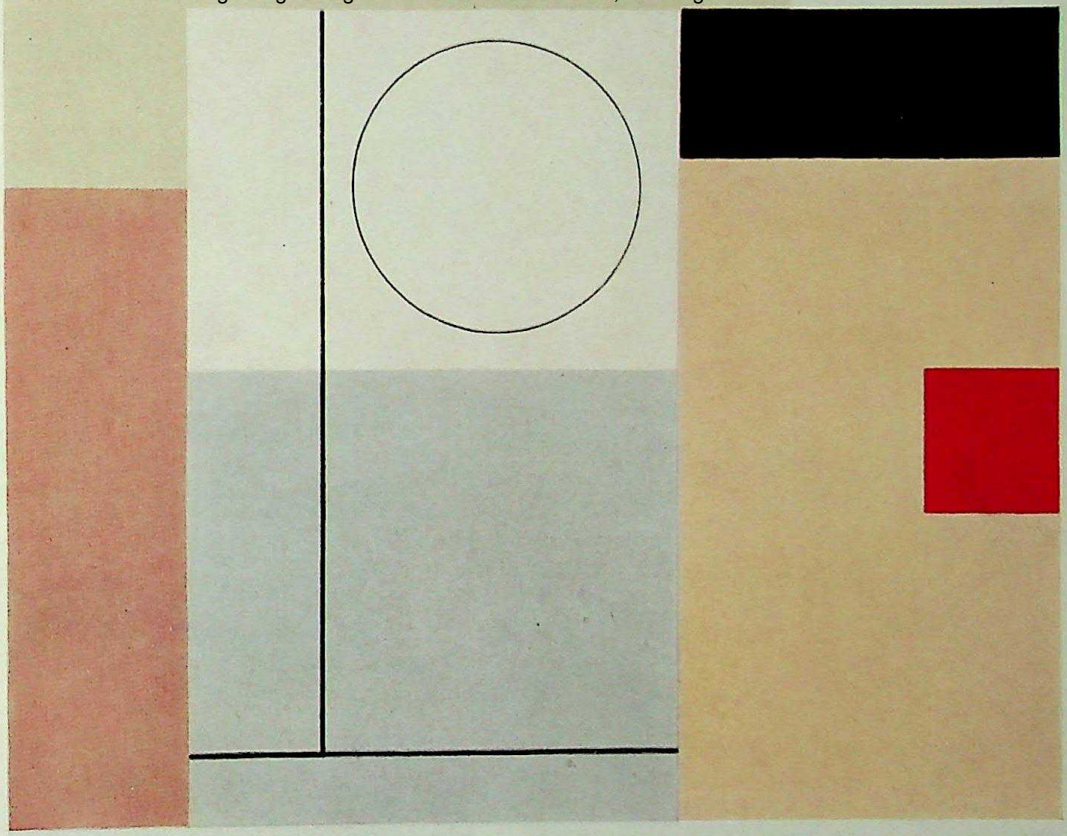

plate 1 *painted relief 1943*

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plate 2 *striped jug 1911*

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plate 3 *pomegranate 1929*

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plate 4 *still life with knife and lemon 1927*

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plate 5 *Cumbrian landscape 1928*

plate 6 *Pill Creek, Cornwall 1928*

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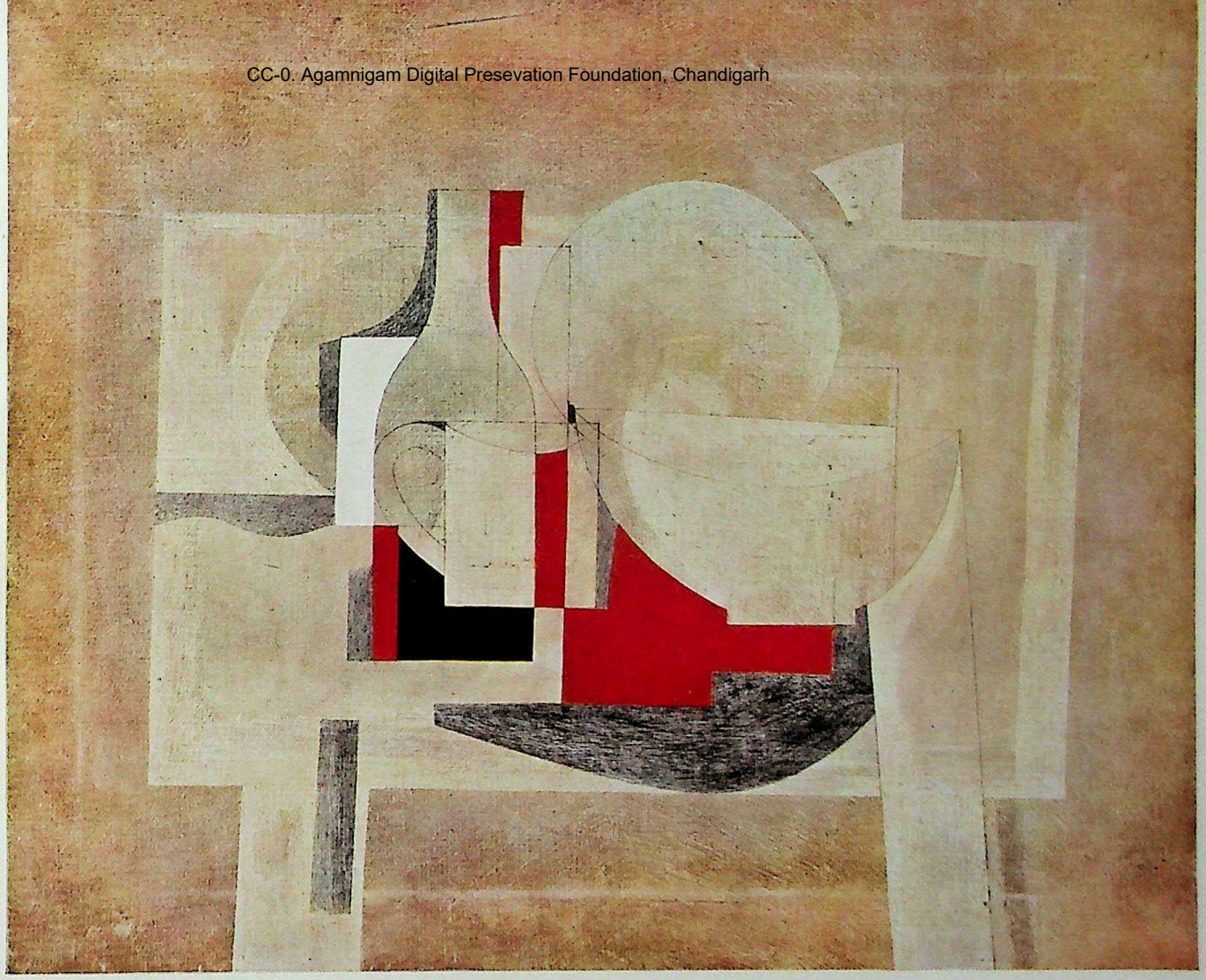


plate 7 still life 1929-35

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

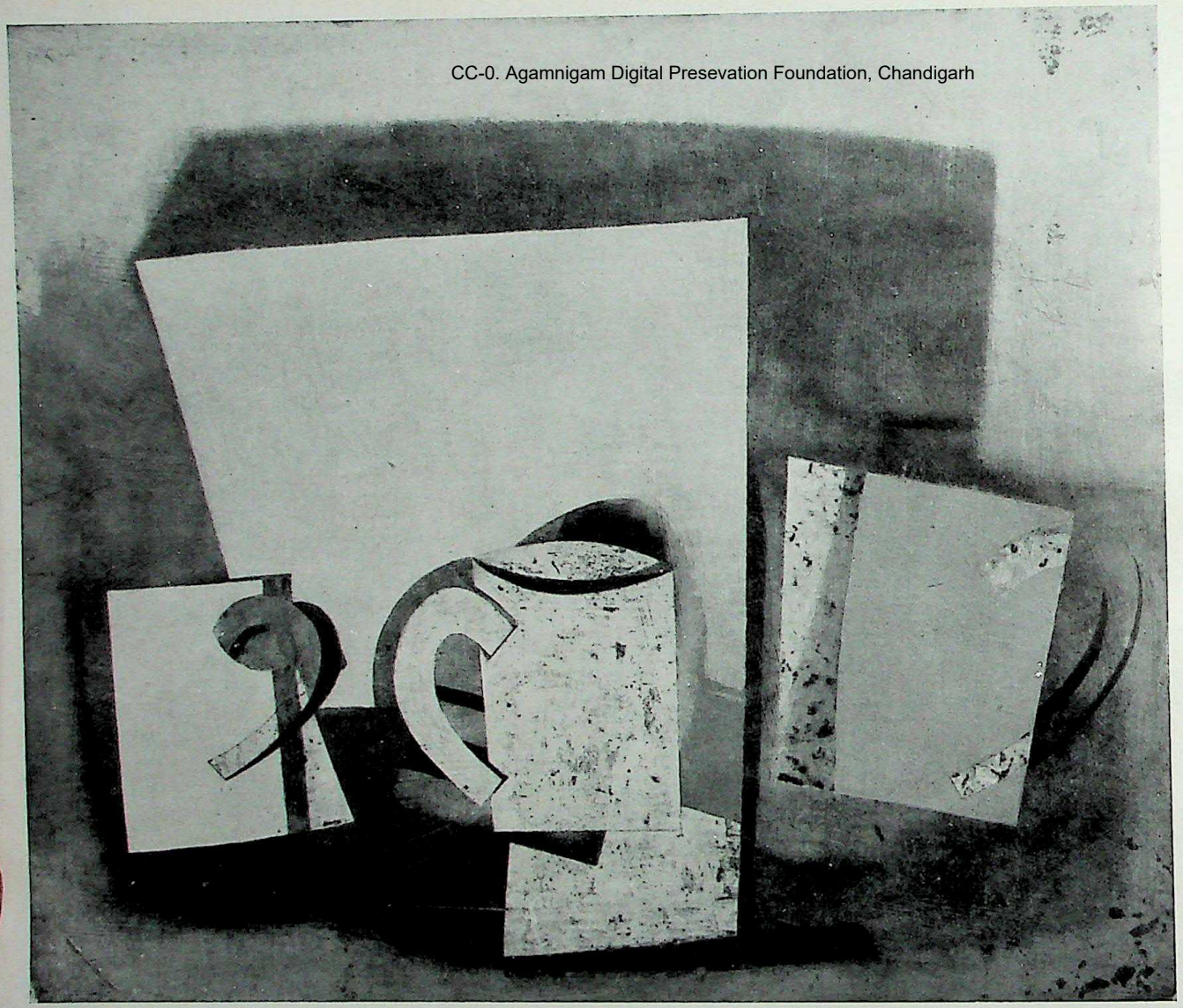


plate 8 still life 1933-35

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

plate 9 *prince and princess 1932*

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

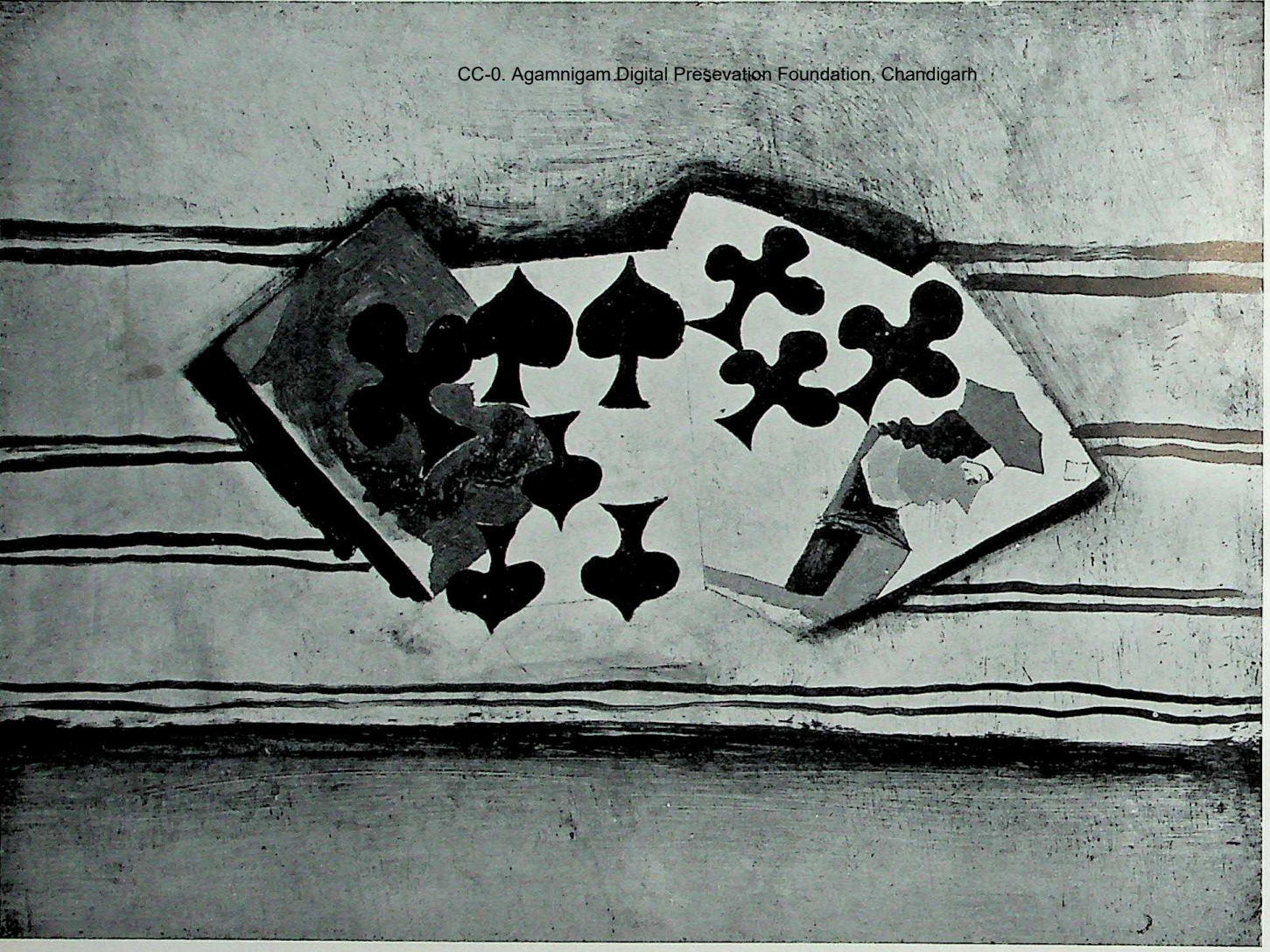


plate 10 playing cards 1932

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

plate 11 au chat botté 1932

coin and musical instruments 1933

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

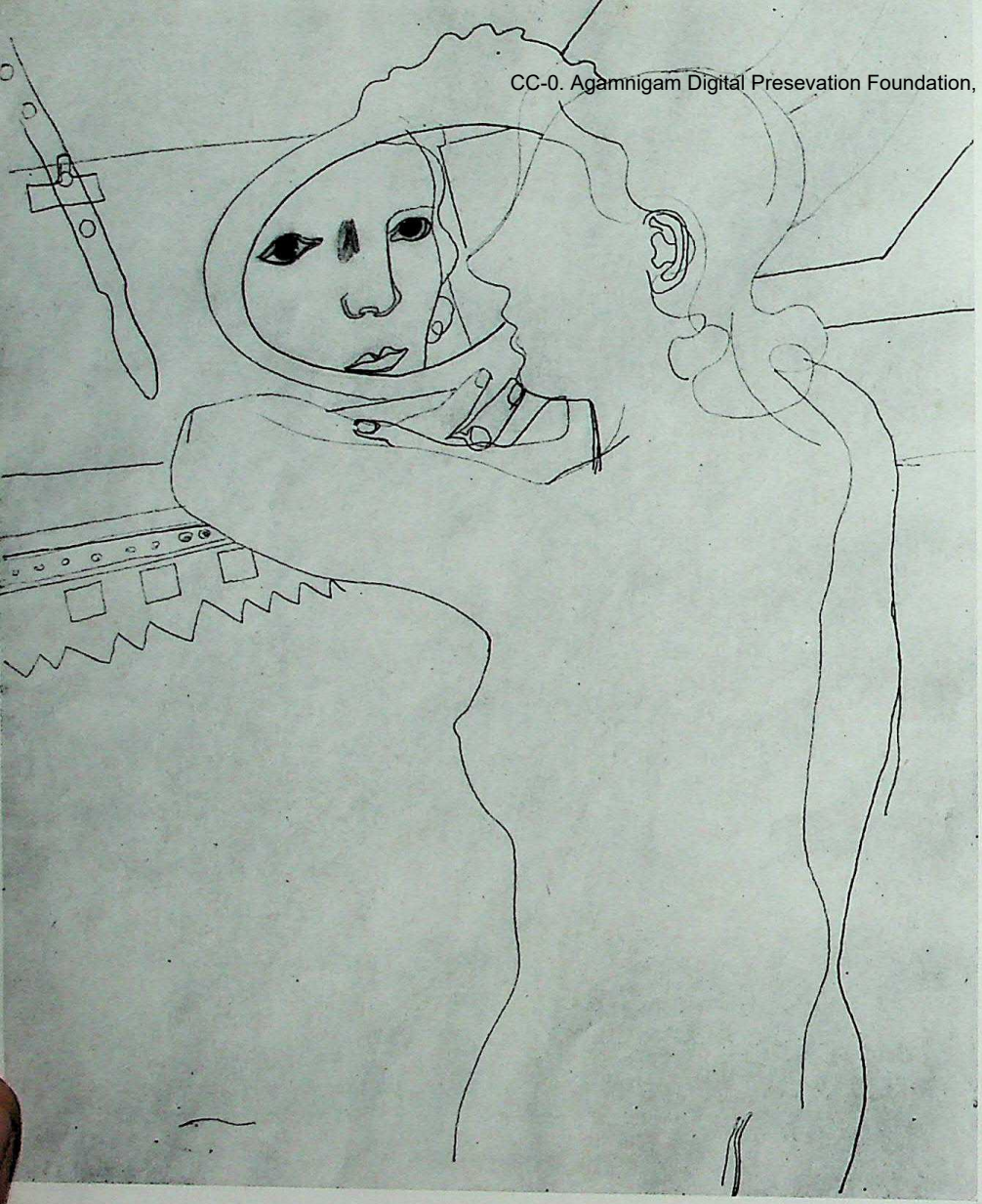
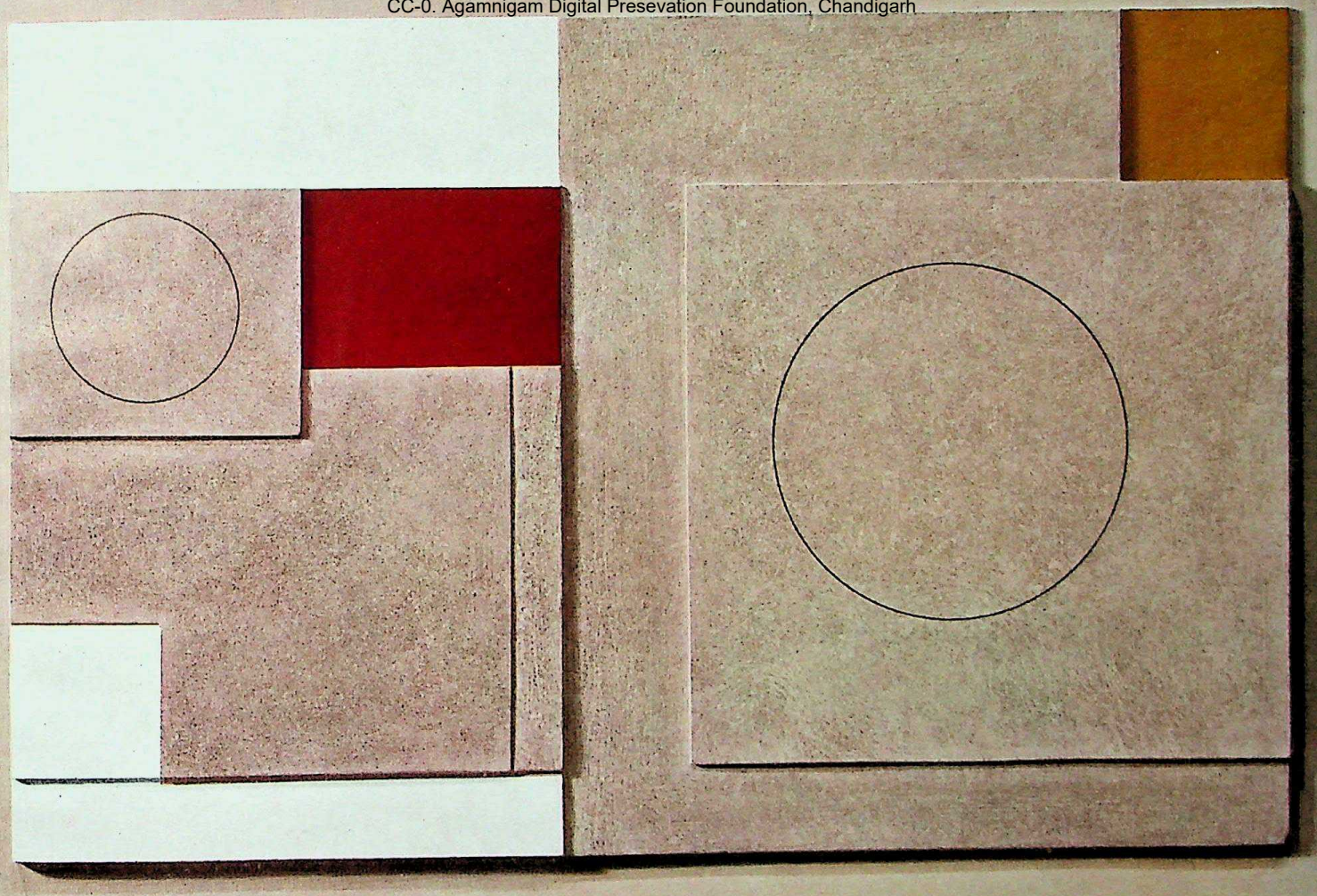


plate 12 girl in mirror, drawing 1932

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh



CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

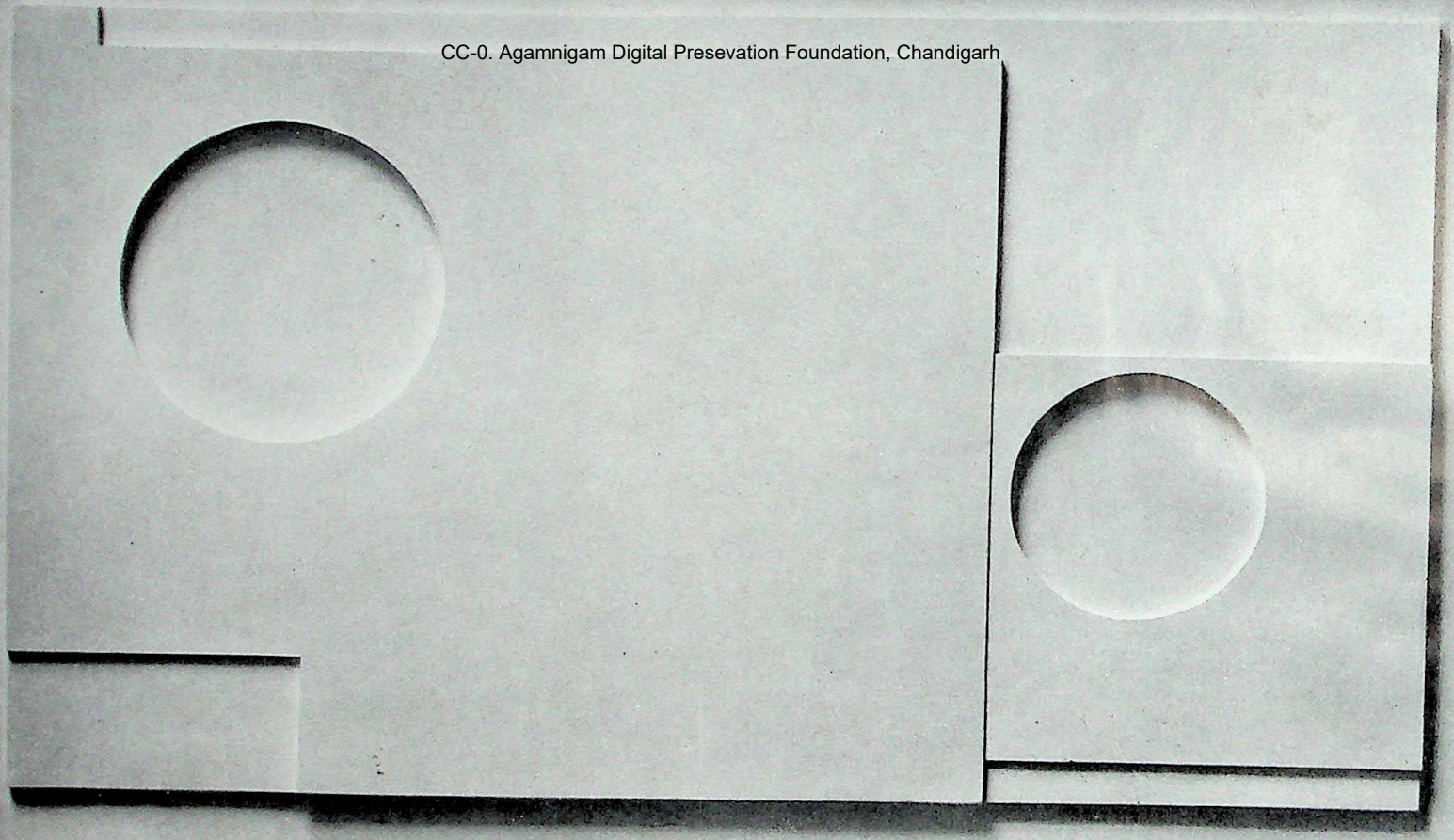


plate 20 *white relief 1935*

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

plate 21 *two forms 1940-42*

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

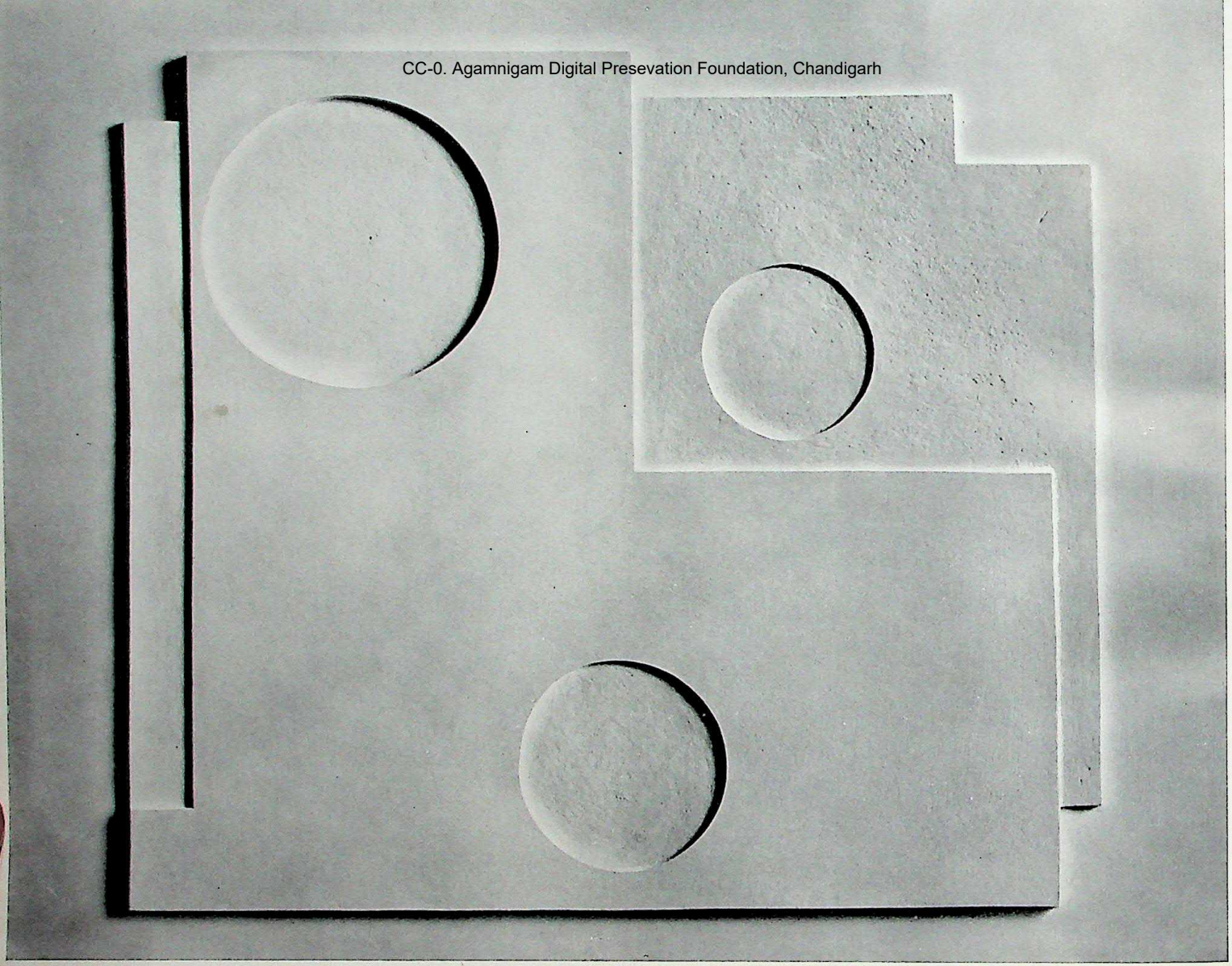


plate 22 white relief 1935

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

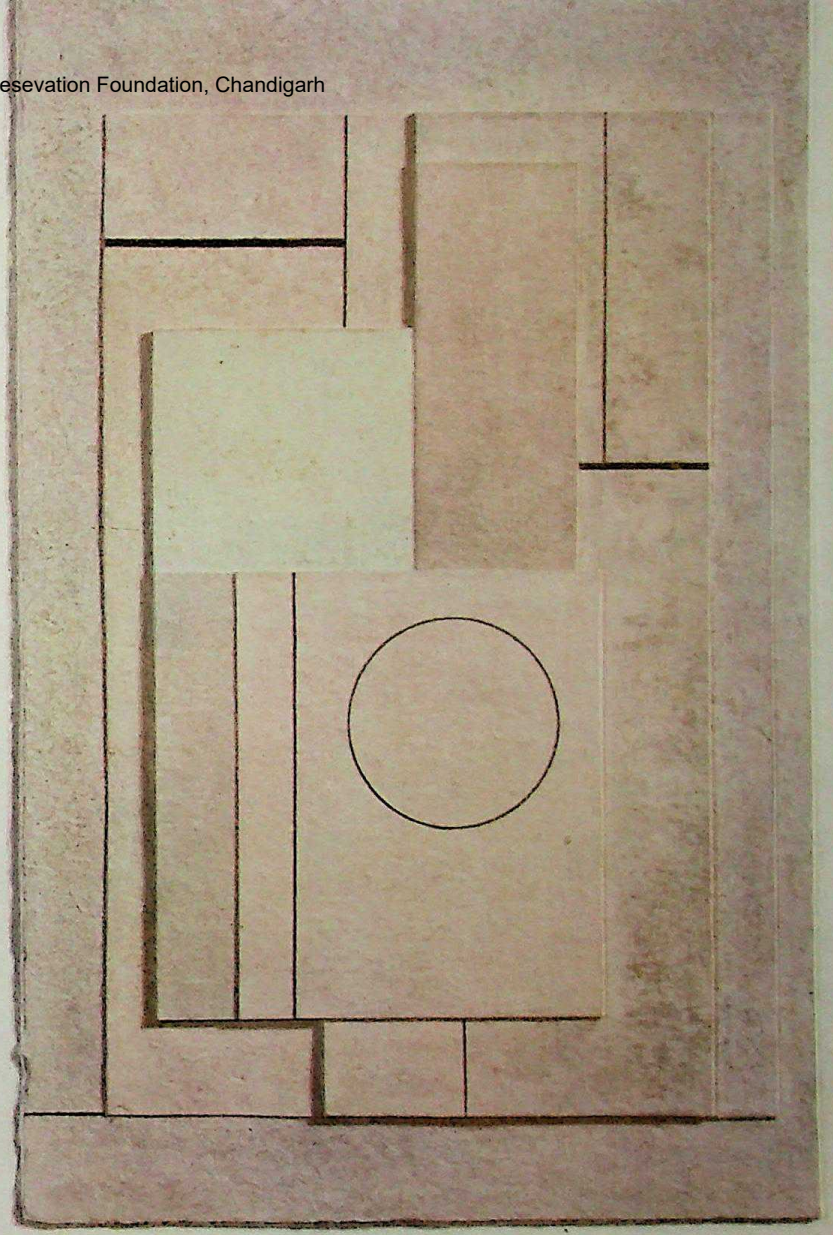


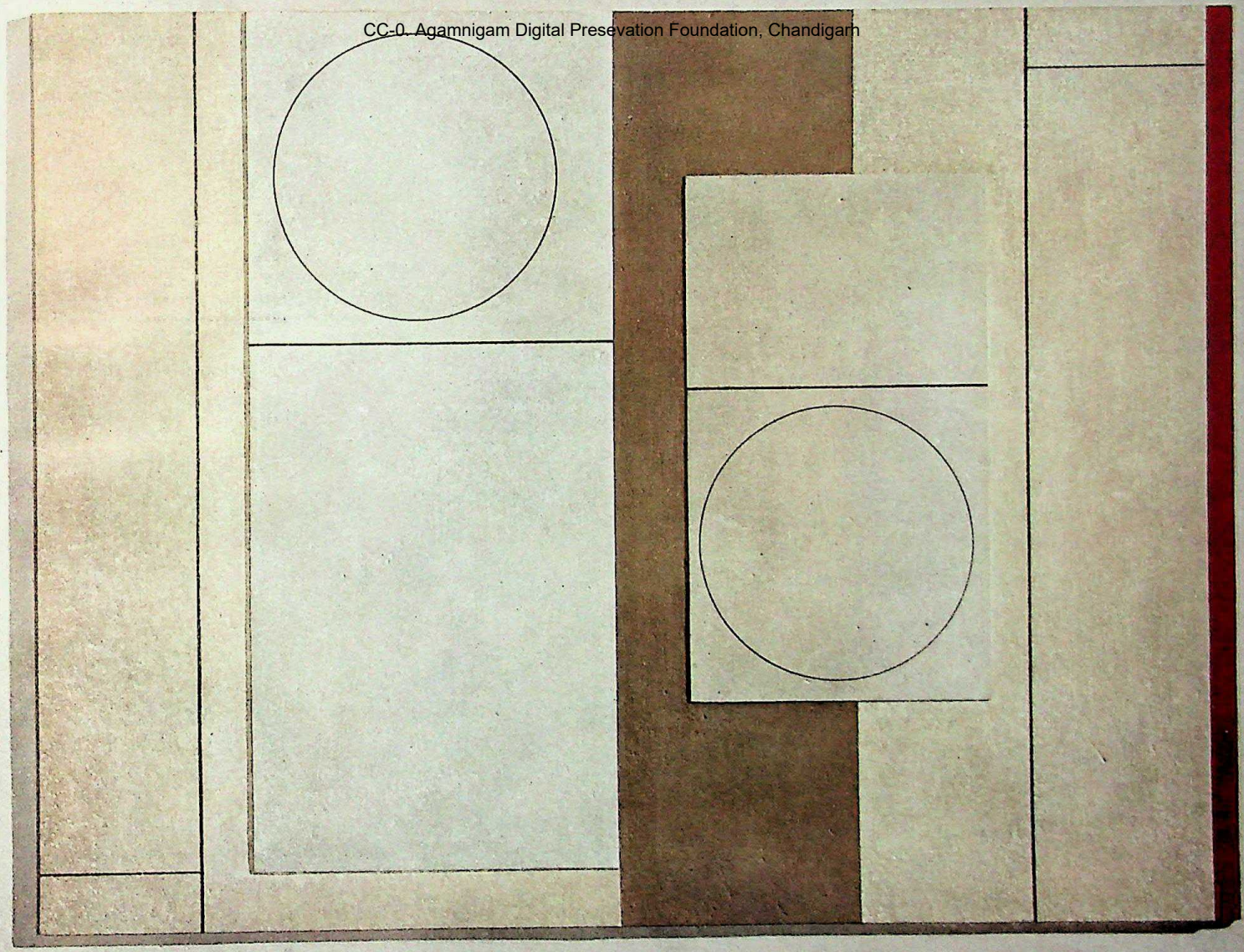
plate 23 painted relief 1942-43

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

plate 24 still life 1930-42

plate 25
painted relief 1943-44

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh



CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

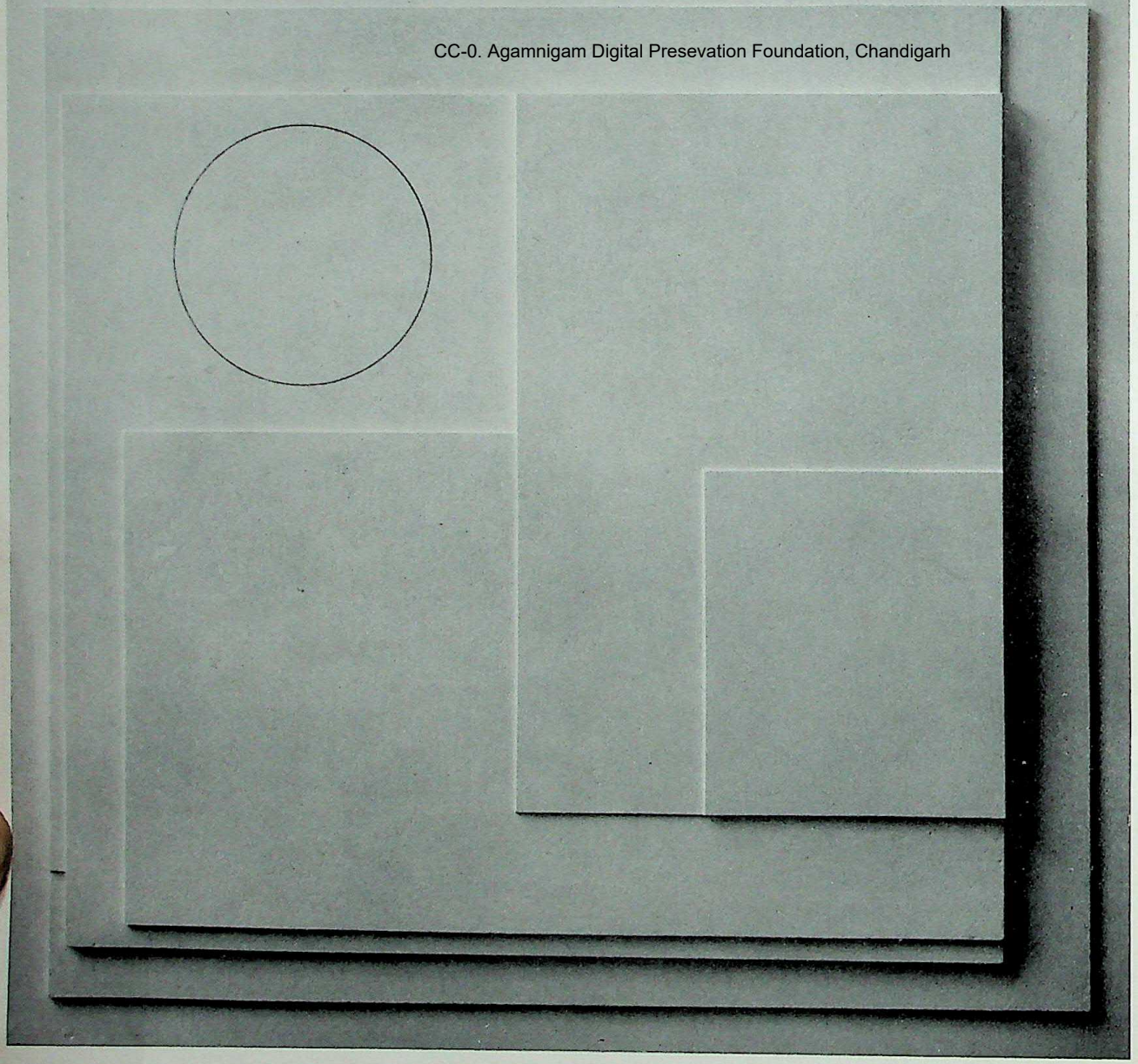
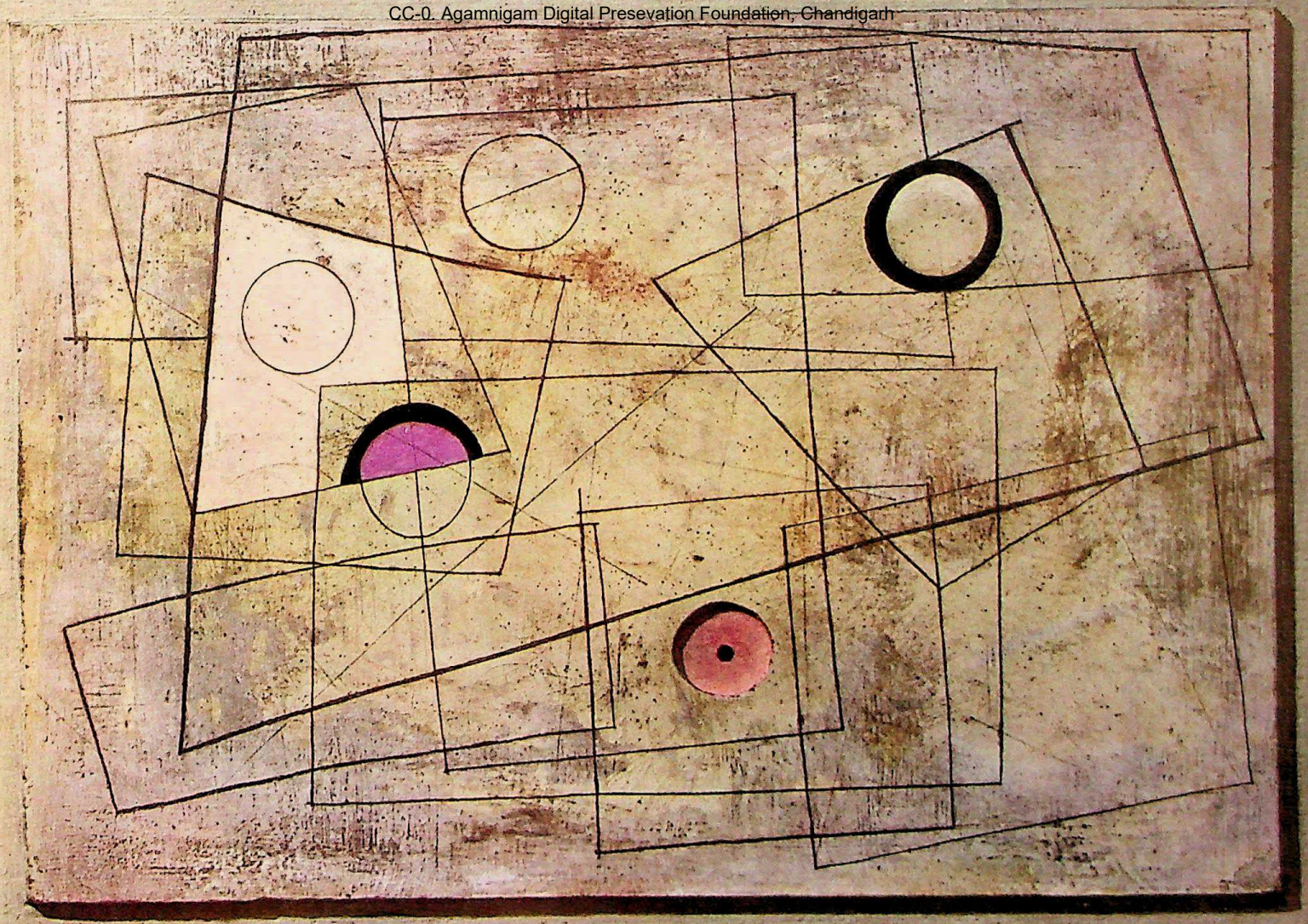


plate 27
parrot's eye 1945

plate 26
white relief 1939

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh



CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

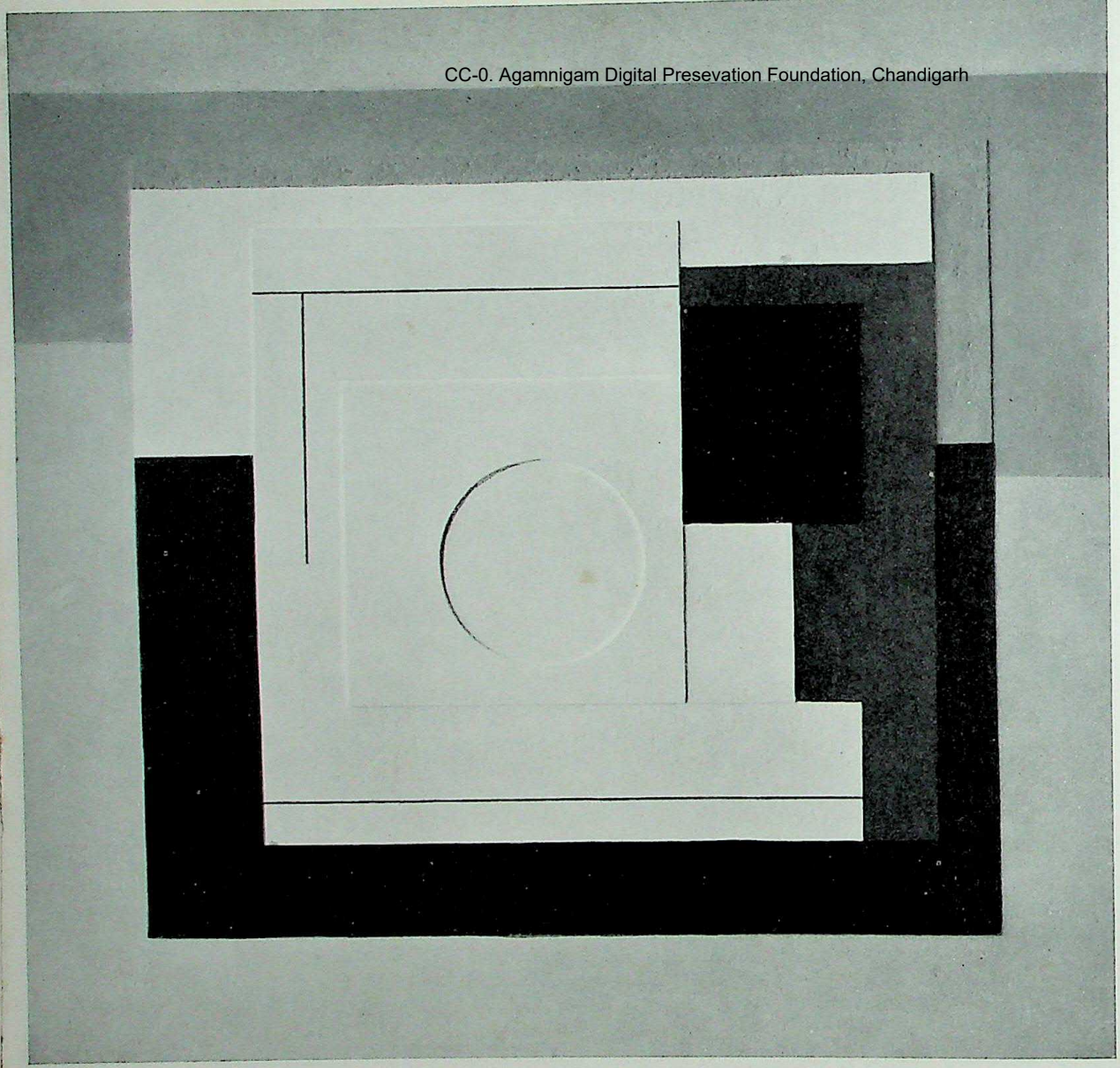


plate 28 painted relief 1944-45

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

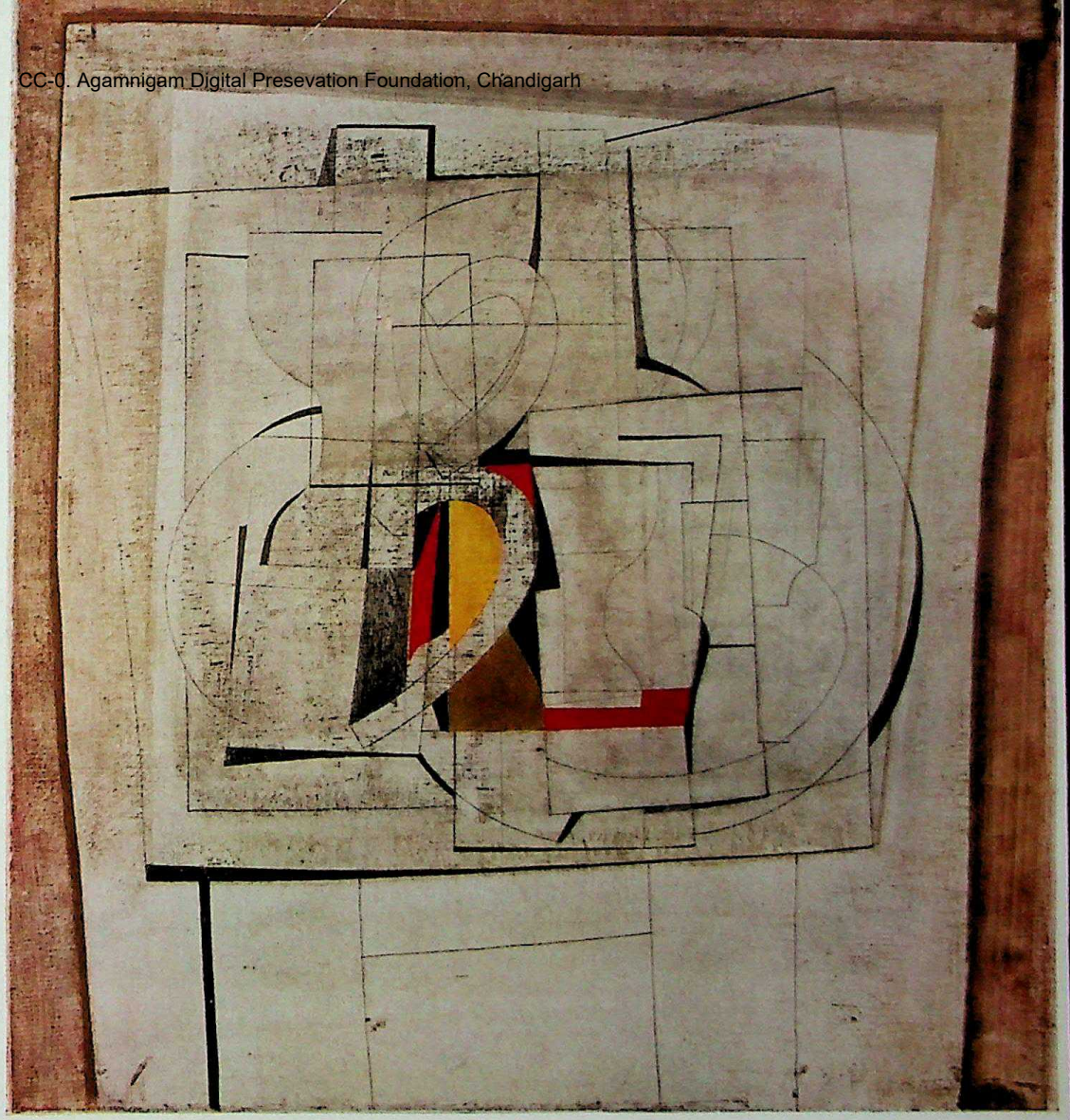


plate 29 still life 1945

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

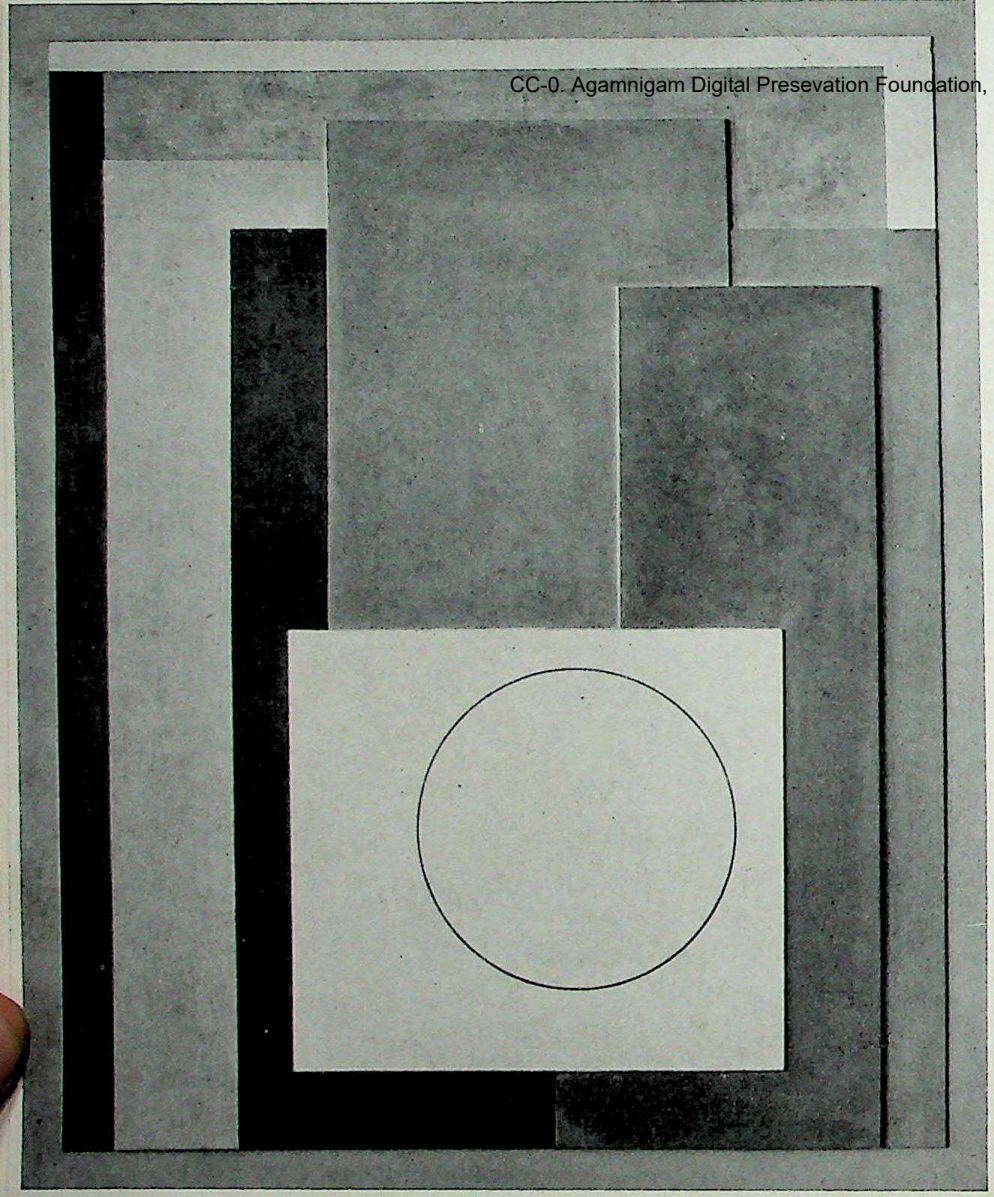


plate 30 painted relief 1945

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

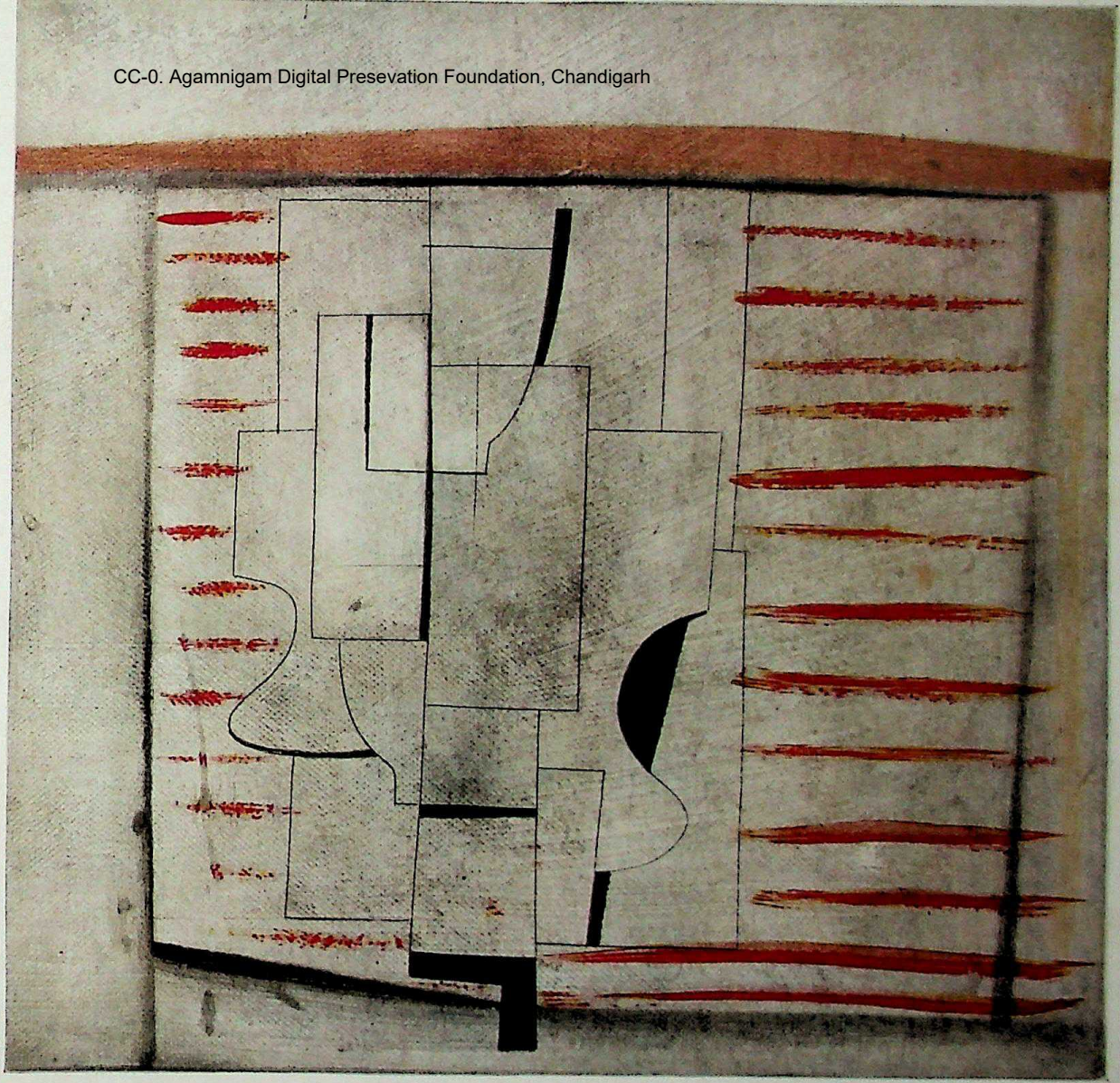


plate 31 still life 1945

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

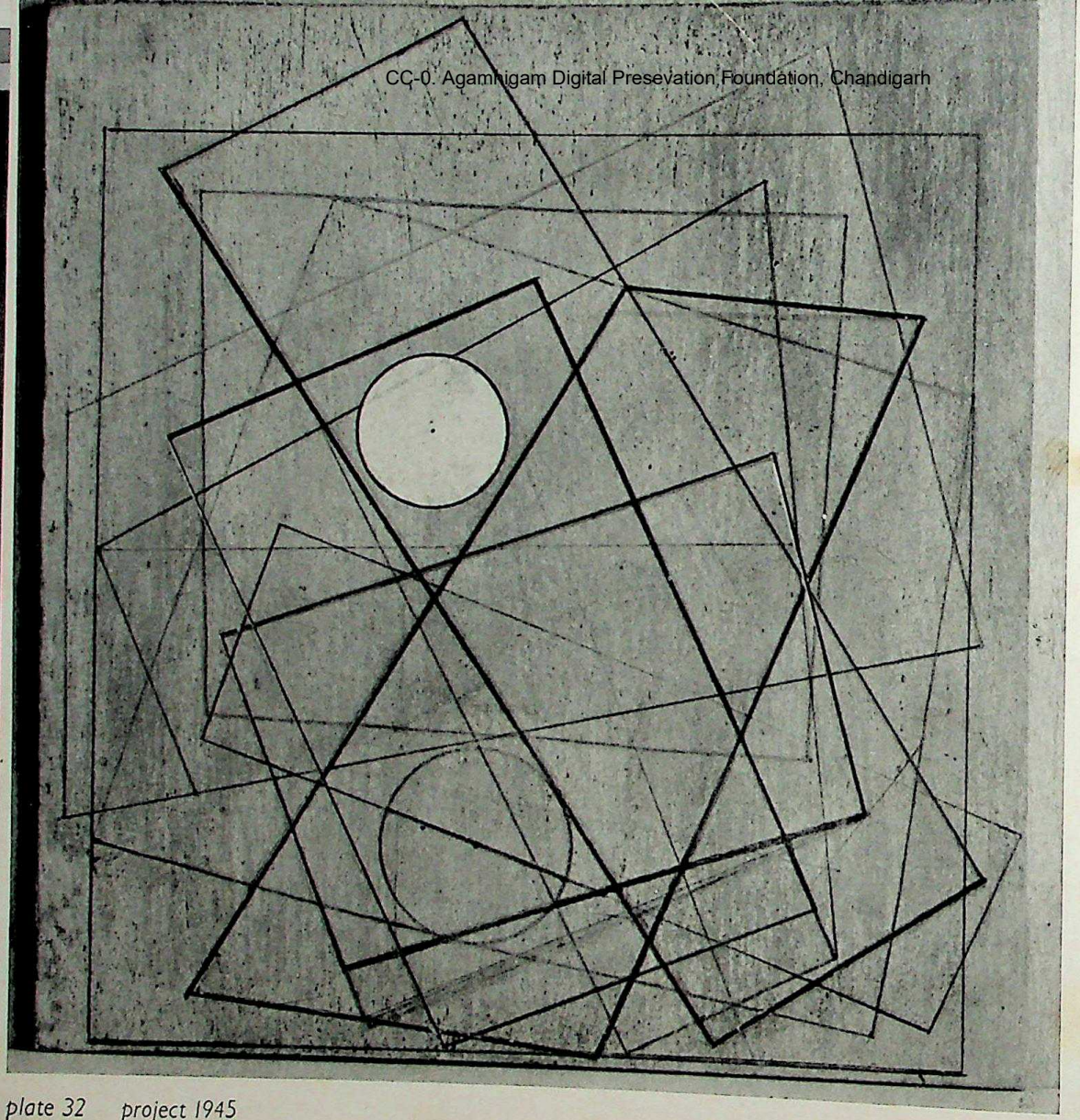


plate 32 project 1945

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

THREE SHILLINGS
AND SIXPENCE